San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority

San Gabriel River Discovery Center
CEQA Initial Study

1. **Project title:** San Gabriel River Discovery Center at Whittier Narrows

2. **Lead agency:** San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority
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3. **Contact person:** Valorie Shatynski, Executive Officer,
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4. **Project location:** The 8.1-acre San Gabriel River Discovery Center (Discovery Center) project site is located within the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area (Recreation Area) in eastern Los Angeles County (**Figure 1**, Regional Location Map). The Recreation Area is located between the San Gabriel River and the Rio Hondo (a tributary of the Los Angeles River), approximately 10 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. The Recreation Area is surrounded by South El Monte and Rosemead to the north, the City of Industry to the east, Pico Rivera to the south, and Montebello to the west. Pockets of unincorporated County land are located to the east and west of the Recreation Area. The project site is located less than one mile from the intersection of Interstate 605 (I-605, San Gabriel River Freeway) and State Route 60 (SR 60, Pomona Freeway). As shown on **Figure 2**, Vicinity Map, the project site is bound by Durfee Avenue to the north, open space to the east and south, and a commercial/industrial parcel to the west.

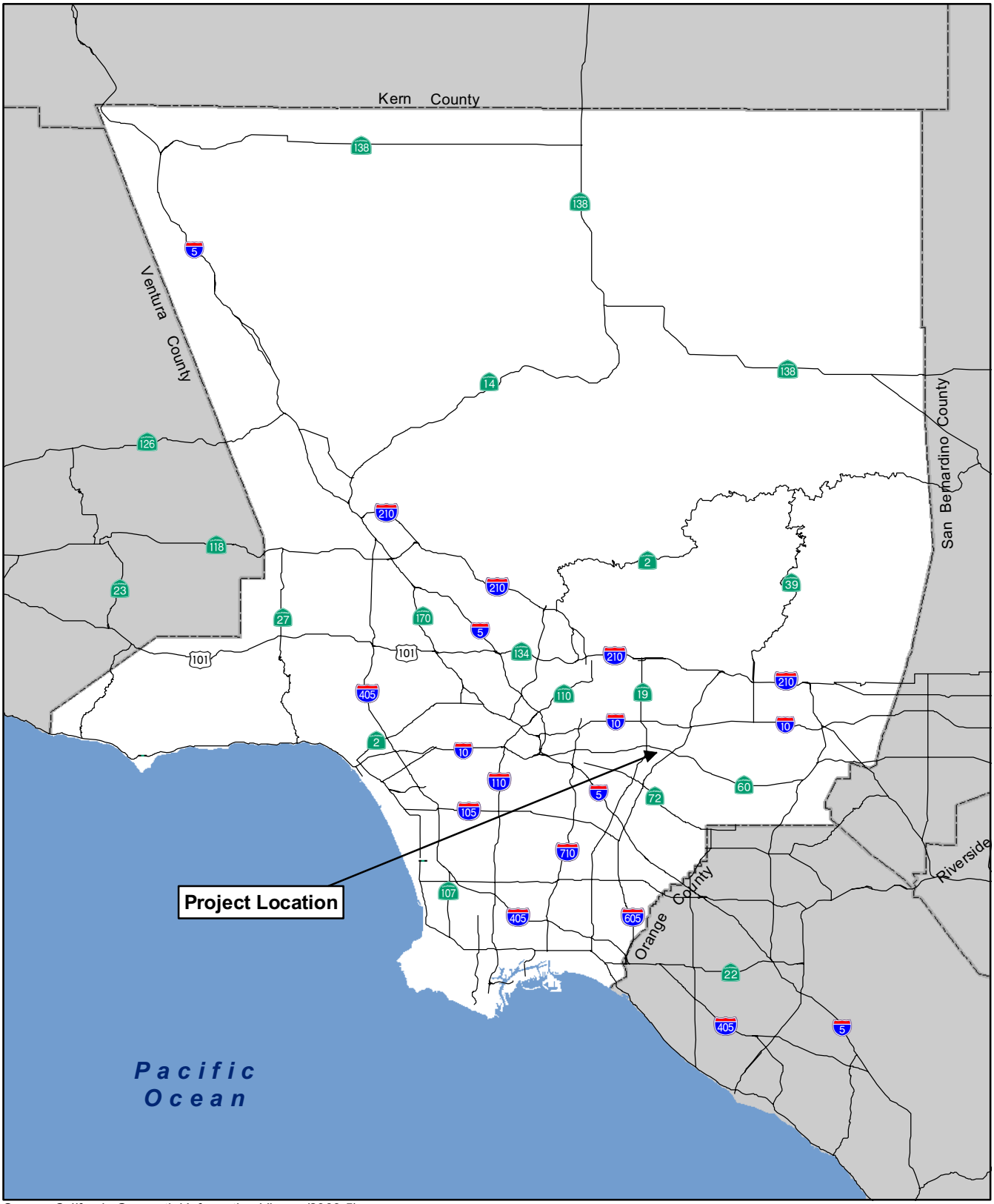
5. **General plan designation:** Open Space (Los Angeles County General Plan Whittier Narrows & South El Monte Land Use Plan)

6. **Zoning:** Open Space (O-S)

7. **Description of project**:

Background

The San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority (Authority) was established to oversee the planning and operation of the Discovery Center. The Authority consists of the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, the Central Basin Municipal Water District, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (LADPR), and the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers



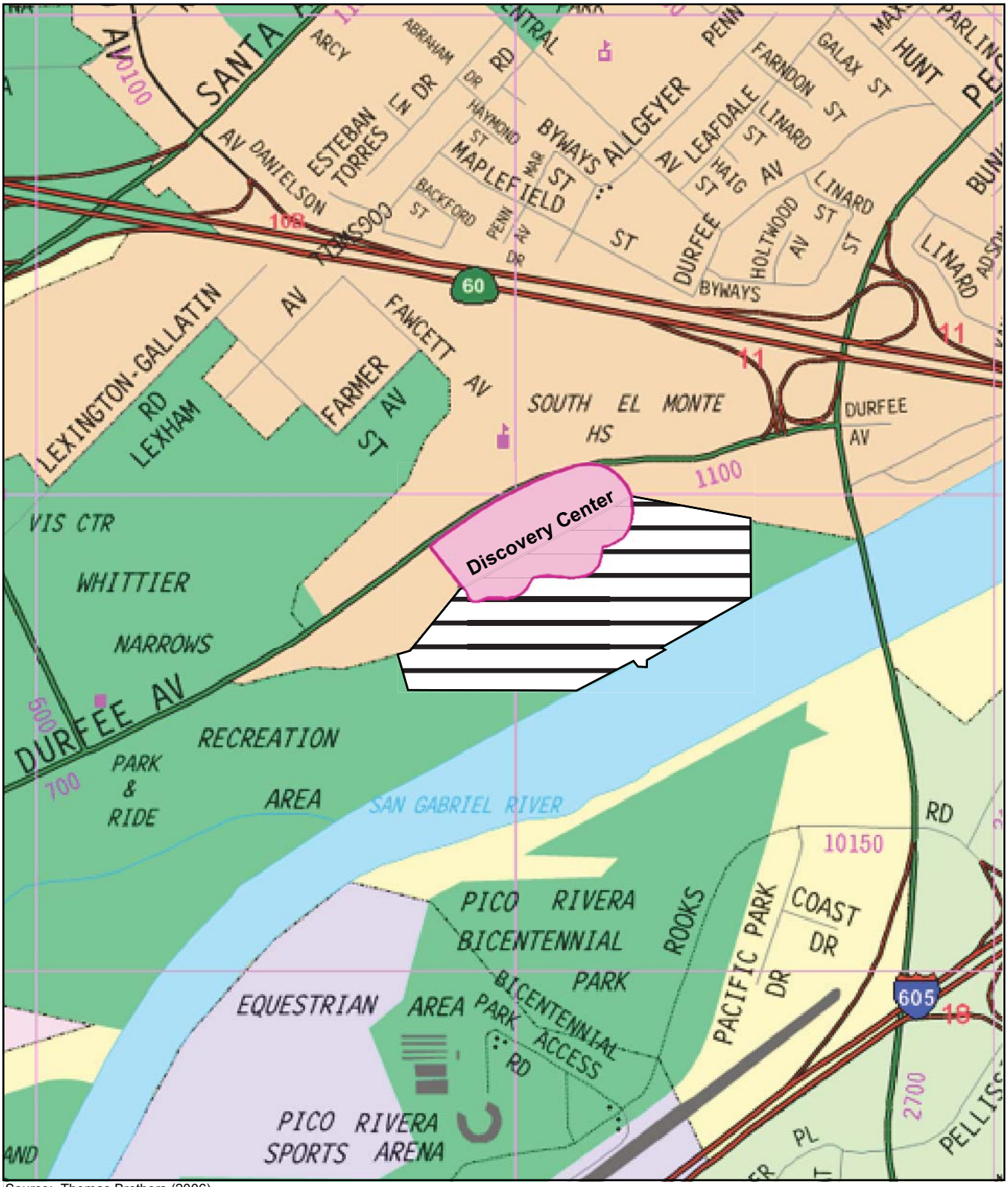
Source: California Geospatial Information Library (2003-5)

Figure 1
Regional Location Map

N

1 inch equals 12 miles

0 3 6 12 18 24 Miles



Source: Thomas Brothers (2006)

Figure 2
Vicinity Map

N

Discovery Center (8.1 acres)

Potential Future Development

and Mountains Conservancy (RMC). The community is also involved in the creation of the Discovery Center through stakeholder committees.

The Discovery Center project is part of a concurrent planning effort encompassing the entire San Gabriel River Corridor. In 1999, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Public Works (LACDPW) to prepare a master plan for the San Gabriel River corridor. In 2004, the Draft San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan (SGRCMP) emerged from this multi-year community-based planning process. The SGRCMP identifies priorities, provides guidance, and helps coordinate over 130 independently sponsored enhancement projects along the river, including the Discovery Center project. The SGRCMP Program EIR (PEIR) was released for public review in February 2005, which evaluated five Concept Design Studies (including the Discovery Center) and identified programmatic impacts and mitigation measures for each project. The PEIR was certified on June 12, 2006 (SCH No. 2003041187) by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The relevant mitigation measures from the PEIR will be incorporated into this project and additional project-level analysis and mitigation measures will be provided.

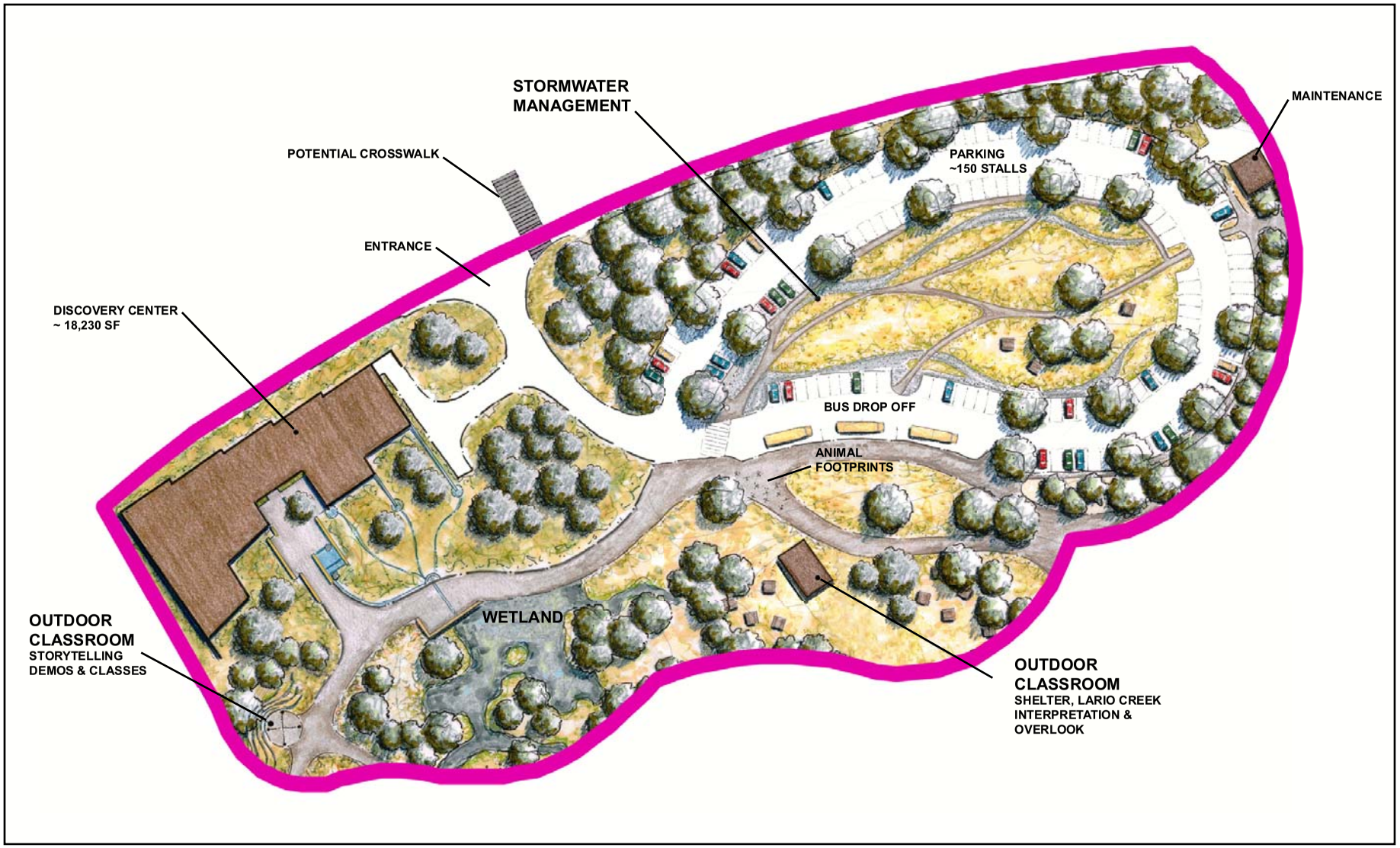
Project Overview

The Discovery Center project consists of a new building and site construction on approximately 8 acres within the Recreation Area, as shown on **Figure 3**, Conceptual Site Plan. The primary project features include a main building, parking lot, maintenance building, open air classroom, constructed wetland, covered outdoor classroom, and connecting pathways from these locations. These components are described below, followed by a summary of the anticipated construction requirements for the project.

Any future recreational development or habitat restoration activities within the surrounding Recreation Area would be addressed in later design proposals as funding is identified. These projects would be evaluated in separate environmental documents.

Project Features

Main Building. The existing Whittier Narrows Nature Center (WNNC) would be demolished in order to construct the Discovery Center main building. The new one-story, approximately 18,230-square-foot (sf) building would be located on the western portion of the project site along Durfee Avenue, as shown on Figure 3. The main building would include a lobby, exhibit areas, classrooms, support facilities, and administrative offices including a Los Angeles County Sheriff substation. Access to the main building would be provided at the existing driveway location on the south side of Durfee Avenue. A new 150-car parking lot would be constructed on the eastern portion of the project site. The maintenance building would be located on the eastern end of the parking lot and would provide parking for maintenance vehicles, material storage, and office space for site maintenance staff. Parking for bicycles would also be provided. During some weekend special events, overflow parking at South El Month High School may be required. A new cross-walk would be installed at the park entrance to assist in safe pedestrian access to the project site. An entry gate would prohibit vehicular access into the project site after regular operating hours.



Source: Thomas Hacker Architects (May 2006)

Figure 3
Conceptual Site Plan

The new Discovery Center main building would be constructed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, which would increase the efficiency of energy, water and building material use on-site. Some of the sustainable design features that may be incorporated into the main building include rammed-earth walls, cooling towers, and use of renewable building materials. The building would also be designed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Uniform Building Code (UBC), and all other necessary building code requirements.

The Discovery Center would host a range of educational activities and would be utilized by several public agencies. A variety of activities would be expected to occur at the facility, including youth, adult, family, and senior citizen nature trail and bird walks, clean-up events, docent and volunteer training, summer camps, junior ranger and naturalist programs, and moonlight and stargazing opportunities. On weekdays, the Discovery Center would accommodate school field trips (approximately 10,000 to 12,000 students per year) and formal school programs focusing on watershed education. Special events would occur on some weekends and attract approximately 300 to 400 visitors per day; however, most weekends would experience normal visitor levels of approximately 200 to 250 visitors per day. Expected annual attendance would range from 100,000 to 120,000 visitors.

It is expected that the Discovery Center and the parking lot would be open to the public from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM seven days per week; however, meeting rooms would be available for reservations from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM (consistent with exhibit hall hours) on weekends. The remainder of the project site would be open during daylight hours only.

Outdoor Classrooms and Wetland Area. Two outdoor classrooms would be developed on-site. An open air classroom would be constructed immediately south of the main building and a covered classroom would be constructed to the south of the proposed parking lot (see Figure 3, Conceptual Site Plan). The open air classroom would allow for casual seating of 50 to 120 people. The covered classroom structure would be used for group gatherings, as well as outdoor classroom functions. Restrooms, storage space, and electricity would be provided. Picnic tables and benches would serve as furniture.

A small constructed wetland is proposed to filter and cleanse storm water from the main building, parking lot, and road. It would also allow a degraded portion of the site to be restored into a wetland ecosystem and would provide interpretive opportunities for Discovery Center visitors. The wetland would be membrane-lined with a piped connection from the parking lot.

Trails. A series of ADA-accessible trails would be developed that would radiate from the Discovery Center, consistent with the overall LADPR trails plan. Interpretive signs, displays, or shelters would be incorporated at key locations. Where trails traverse wetland or sensitive vegetation areas, they would be constructed as boardwalks to minimize disturbance. Pedestrian access to the Discovery Center would be provided from the San Gabriel River trail system, and from Siphon Road and Durfee Avenue. Bicycle access is currently provided from Durfee Avenue and may be available from the San Gabriel river trail system. However, bicycle use would be restricted within the wildlife sanctuary for habitat/wildlife protection and visitor safety and solitude.

Utilities. The reduction of potable water use is a priority of the Discovery Center's design. A locally supplied source of recycled water is available and would be used for landscape irrigation, water

closets, and the exterior fountain. However, new domestic and fire service lines would be required as a part of the proposed project to service the Discovery Center, maintenance building, and outdoor classrooms. The proposed project would require a domestic water meter (3-inch) and fire meter (6-inch) service be installed by the local jurisdictional agency from an existing main water supply line in Durfee Avenue. In addition, new sanitary sewer lines would be required to service the Discovery Center, maintenance building, and outdoor classrooms. The existing WNNC utilizes a sanitary septic system that would be demolished as a part of this project. It is anticipated that all sanitary sewer lines would be directed to one location where a sewer ejector pump would discharge the sewage to the existing 8-inch concrete sewer line located in Durfee Avenue. Metered and regulated natural gas would be extended from the street main and distributed through risers and branches to required outlet and equipment. A seismic shut-off valve would be located downstream of the meter. The proposed storm water drainage system would be designed utilizing sustainable design methods and would not exceed existing outflow rates and volumes. Constructed wetlands, vegetated swales, and bio-swales would be created on-site to reduce runoff velocities, encourage habitat, and remove storm water contaminants.

Construction. All existing site features would be demolished, including the WNNC building (2,000 sf), restroom and storage area (900 sf), picnic shelter (1,000 sf), Los Angeles County Sheriff's substation (900 sf), garage (700 sf), and shed (80 sf). Several existing trees would be removed as part of project construction, including an 84-inch eucalyptus, a 48-inch bay laurel, a 40-inch redwood, and various sycamores, black walnut, Chinese elm, and elderberry under 15 inches. The LADPR has a policy of no net loss of trees. As such, all mature trees would be relocated and/or replaced. The Approximately 24,000 sf of demolition debris would be generated by removing the existing parking lot and driveway. Demolition debris would be recycled and/or reused, when possible. Hours of construction would be limited to between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM, Monday through Saturday, per the County Noise Ordinance. No construction would occur on Sunday or holidays. It is anticipated that construction activities would occur between December 2008 and June 2010. During construction, portions of the project site may be temporarily fenced off and closed to visitors. In addition, officers assigned to the existing Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department substation located on-site would be temporarily assigned to another facility.

8. Surrounding land uses and setting: The proposed project is located in the WNNA. Surrounding land uses include open space and recreation areas to the south, east, and west. South El Monte High School is located directly north of the project site across Durfee Avenue. A commercial building directly abuts the project site to the west. A mix of industrial and multi-family residential uses is located farther west along Durfee Avenue. A church is located east of the project site on Durfee Avenue. Commercial uses are located farther east on both sides of Durfee Avenue at the intersections with Peck Road and SR 60. The San Gabriel River is located south of the project site. Recreational uses, including Pico Rivera Park and Pico Rivera Golf Course are located farther south of the river. The project site is located approximately 0.25 miles south of SR 60 and approximately 0.7 miles north of I-605.

9. Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

Various permits and approvals would be required in order to approve and implement the project. Other regulatory agencies and local jurisdictions would also require permits or approvals in order to construct and operate the proposed project including:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4 (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System)
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (sublease agreement)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
- Utility providers (i.e. utility connection permits)

As the underlying property owner, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA and CEQA processes will be undertaken concurrently for this project in separate environmental documents.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

X	Aesthetics		Agricultural Resources	X	Air Quality
X	Biological Resources	X	Cultural Resources		Geology/Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology/Water Quality		Land Use/Planning
	Mineral Resources	X	Noise		Population/Housing
	Public Services		Recreation	X	Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities/Service Systems	X	Mandatory Findings of Significance		

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions to the project have been made by or agreed to by the applicant. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
X	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the project, nothing further is required.

Signature _____ **Date:** **August 31, 2006**

Printed Name Valorie Shatynski, Executive Officer

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
    a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
    b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
    c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The analysis of each issue should identify:
    a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
    b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
1. AESTHETICS. Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?		X		
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	
e. Create a new source of substantial shade or shadow that would adversely affect daytime views in the area?			X	

The proposed project site (8.1 acres) is located within the Recreation Area on the north side of the San Gabriel River, which is a County designated scenic resource. The project site directly abuts the south side of Durfee Avenue and would be visible from this road. In addition, the project site would be visible from within the Recreation Area and from the Puente Hills to the south. The proposed project involves the removal of the existing WNNC and support facilities in order to construct and operate the Discovery Center on the project site. The project features include a new main building, which would host a range of educational activities and accommodate small and large groups for events, meetings, and conferences; a new 150-space ADA-accessible parking lot; outdoor classrooms; construction of the wetland ecosystem; and trails. The proposed project would reconfigure the existing WNNC site and would include the construction of the Discovery Center and associated facilities in roughly the same locations as the facilities to be replaced. A wetland would be developed on the site of the existing parking lot. In exchange, the new parking lot would be located on a nearby vegetated area a few feet south of Durfee Avenue along the northern border of the project site. Some existing vegetation would be removed to construct the new parking lot, including mature trees, non-native grasses, and weeds. However, new trees would be planted as part of the project and per the LADPR policy thatthere would be no net loss of trees to screen the parking area from views along Durfee Avenue. No buildings greater than one-story would be constructed. As such, the views from public vantage points adjacent to the project site would remain similar to existing conditions. The proposed project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista or scenic resource.

There are no designated state scenic highways near the project site; the closest proposed scenic highway is located approximately 10 miles southeast of the project site off of SR 60 and the closest

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
designated scenic highway is State Route 2 located approximately 20 miles northwest of the project site.[1] Therefore, adverse impacts related to scenic highways would not occur. Implementation of the proposed project would require the removal of mature trees, grasses, and other vegetation in the construction of the new parking lot and creation of a wetland area. This could change the visual quality of the project site. Changes to the existing visual character and quality of the project site will be further analyzed in the EIR. The existing WNNC uses nighttime building lighting and security lighting in the existing parking lot. The proposed facilities would also use nighttime building lighting and security lighting. As under current conditions, parking lot and building lighting would be extinguished by 10:00 PM. In addition, the proposed project would implement PEIR mitigation measure CD-B6, which requires that nighttime lighting be of low-intensity directional lighting focused away from open space areas and adjacent properties to minimize light spill. Further, all new structures would be constructed of non-reflective building materials. Thus, the proposed project would not create a source of substantial light or glare above the existing conditions. The main building would be constructed in roughly the same location as the existing WNNC. As with the existing building, the Discovery Center would be one-story in height. As such, the Discovery Center would be expected to cast similar shade and shadow patterns as the existing WNNC and would not substantially affect daytime views.				
2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X

[1] County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. *County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highways Map*. website http://planning.co.la.ca.us/gp_update/images/07pdf_scenic_highways.pdf, accessed June 28, 2006.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
c. Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				X

The project site is designated as Open Space by the County and no agricultural activities presently occur on-site. It is not classified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. There are no Williamson Act contracts applicable to the project site.[2] Thus, the proposed project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural uses. No impact would result, and no further study of this issue is required.

3. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	X			
c. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

The project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). A project is deemed inconsistent with air quality plans if it results in population and/or employment growth that exceeds growth estimates in the applicable air quality plan. The proposed project is intended to provide a multi-disciplinary educational resource that interprets the ecology and history of the San Gabriel River watershed. The number of employees at the project site is not anticipated to substantially increase as a result of the proposed project. In addition, the main building would be constructed to meet Leadership in Energy

[2] California Department of Conservation. *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program*. website http://www.consrv.ca.gov/DLRP/fmmp/overview/survey_area_map.htm, accessed June 28, 2006.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*

and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System standards, a voluntary national standard for developing and rating high-performance, sustainable buildings, often referred to as "green buildings." Green buildings are constructed to increase the efficiency of energy, water and building materials. The proposed project does not include any residential development, housing, or large local or regional employment centers and would not result in significant population or employment growth. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of an applicable air quality management plan.

The SCAQMD has established standards for air quality constituents generated by construction and by operational activities for such pollutants as ozone (O_3), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and particulate matter (PM_{10}).[3] The SCAQMD maintains an extensive air quality monitoring network to measure criteria pollutant concentrations throughout the SCAB. The SCAB is designated a non-attainment area for O_3, PM_{10}, and particulate matter smaller than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$). The construction and operation of the proposed project would contribute to an increase in air quality emissions for which the region is non-attainment. As such, air quality impacts from construction and operation of the new facilities will be evaluated using the thresholds of significance established by the SCAQMD and presented in their *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. Short-term emissions would result from the use of construction equipment and trips generated by construction workers and haul/material delivery trucks. Long-term emissions would result predominately from the vehicle trips generated by the increase in park use. These emissions could result in the violation of air quality standards or the exceedance of air quality thresholds of significance, which may contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation. Therefore, air quality impacts will be further evaluated in the EIR to determine the level of significance of the short- and long-term impacts.

Sensitive receptors, including nearby residences and South El Monte High School, are located in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Construction and operation of the proposed project may expose these sensitive receptors to increased pollutant concentrations. This issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.

Some objectionable odors may be temporarily created during construction activities, such as paving, tar, or diesel exhaust. These odors would not affect a substantial number of people and would only occur in localized areas during project construction. Impacts related to objectionable odors would be less than significant.

[3] SCAQMD. *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. November 1993. p. 6.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	X			
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	X			
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	X			

Several special status plant and wildlife species are known to exist in the project vicinity including the endangered least Bell's vireo.[4] Most of the special status wildlife species with the potential to occur are birds and include white-tailed kit, northern harrier, Cooper's hawk, loggerhead shrike, yellow warbler, and yellow-breasted chat. Special status habitat types include Mexican elderberry-walnut woodland and riparian scrub. The Mexican elderberry woodland contains southern California black walnut, which is considered a sensitive species by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Riparian scrub supports moderate to high-quality habitat for wildlife in the vicinity and may

[4] County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan Draft Program Environmental Impact Report. SCH No. 2003041187. Prepared by MWH. February 2005. pp. 4.2-18 to4.2-19.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
also be within the ACOE and/or CDFG jurisdiction associated with wetlands, waters of the U.S., or streambeds.[5] In addition, the project site is within a County-designated Significant Ecological Area (SEA). Biological surveys and a detailed biological resources technical report will be undertaken for the project to fully characterize the existing biological conditions at the project site and evaluate the potential impacts associated with development of the Discovery Center project. The technical report will be included as an appendix to the EIR and the results of the biological resource surveys will be summarized and incorporated into the EIR. If necessary, mitigation measures will be provided in the technical report to address potential impacts to biological resources resulting from the project.				
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?	X			
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?	X			
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

The existing WNNC was constructed more than 50 years ago and may qualify for listing as a historic resource. There are also recorded cultural resources in the project vicinity and field surveys determined that there is the potential to encounter buried resources during project construction. Accordingly, a records search, site survey, and cultural resources technical report will be prepared for the proposed project. The technical report will be included as an appendix to the EIR and the results of the site survey will be summarized and presented in the EIR. If necessary, mitigation measures will be provided in the technical report to address potential impacts to cultural resources resulting from the proposed project.

Paleontological resources are remains of plants and animals, fossilized and predating human occupation. Paleontological resources are generally found in sedimentary rocks that have been uplifted, eroded or otherwise exposed. The project site consists of predominantly recent, unconsolidated alluvial material deposits by the San Gabriel River, which have low probability of containing paleontological resources. As such, paleontological resources are not likely to occur at the project site. In accordance with PEIR mitigation measure MP-C2, if previously unknown

[5] *Ibid.*

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
paleontological resources are discovered in the course of excavation for project construction, the construction inspector shall have the authority and responsibility to halt construction until a qualified paleontologist or archaeologist can evaluate the significance and distribution of the materials, and identify future activities needed. The impact to paleontological resources would be a less than significant. No known human remains are known to exist on the project site, and the project site is not designated nor has it been designated for use as a cemetery. In accordance with PEIR mitigation measure MP-C3, if human remains are discovered in the course of excavation for project construction, the County Coroner shall be contacted and provisions of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 shall be followed. The impact to human remains would be less than significant.				
6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?				X
b. Result in substantial soil erosion, loss of topsoil, or changes in topography or unstable soil conditions from excavation, grading, or fill?		X		
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				X

As with most of southern California, the project site is located in a seismically active region. The project site is not located within a fault rupture zone or within a currently established Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. There are no active faults that traverse the project site; however, several potentially active faults are located in the project vicinity: Newport-Inglewood, Raymond, Los Alamitos, Whittier-Elsinore, Sierra Madre-San Fernando, and San Gabriel faults. Although the potential for surface rupture at the site is low, the site could be subject to strong ground shaking in the event of an earthquake. As with all projects in southern California, all proposed project structures would be designed and constructed in accordance with the California Building Code, the Uniform Building Code, the Los Angeles County Building Code, and all other applicable local, state, and federal codes relative to seismic criteria. Compliance with existing regulations would ensure that neither people nor structures are exposed to potential adverse effects from fault rupture and strong seismic ground shaking.

According to the Los Angeles County Seismic Safety Element, the project site is not located within an area identified by the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) as having the potential for earthquake-induced landslides.[6,7] In addition, the project site is not within an area identified as having a potential for seismic slope instability.[8,9] There are no known landslide areas near the project site, nor is the project site in the path of any known potential landslides. The proposed project site has a relatively flat topography, which precludes both landslide problems and lurching. Impacts related to landslides would not occur.

The relatively flat nature of the proposed project site precludes it from being readily susceptible to erosion. However, construction of the proposed project would result in ground surface disruption during grading and trenching that could create the potential for erosion to occur. Since the proposed project site is greater than one acre, the construction contractor would prepare and comply with a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would feature erosion control measures.[10] In

6 County of Los Angeles. *County of Los Angeles General Plan Safety Element*. Adopted December 6, 1990.
7 California Geological Survey. *Seismic Hazards Mapping Program, El Monte Quadrangle*. March 25, 1999. website http://gmw.consrv.ca.gov/shmp/download/pdf/ozn_elmo.pdf, accessed July 27, 2006.
8 County of Los Angeles. *County of Los Angeles General Plan Safety Element*. Adopted December 6, 1990.
9 California Geological Survey. *Seismic Hazards Mapping Program, El Monte Quadrangle*. March 25, 1999. website http://gmw.consrv.ca.gov/shmp/download/pdf/ozn_elmo.pdf, accessed July 27, 2006.
10 Clean Water Act. United States Code, Title 33, Sections 101-607. Amended November 27, 2002.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*

addition, the construction contractor would comply with the Storm Water Construction Activities General Permit and obtain a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.[11] Adherence to existing regulations and implementation of standard construction practices would ensure that soil erosion would be mitigated to a less than significant level. This issue will be further analyzed in the EIR and appropriate mitigation measures will be provided.

Liquefaction is the process in which sediments below the water table temporarily lose strength and behave as a liquid rather than a solid. Liquefaction generally occurs in sand and silts in areas with high groundwater levels. Due to the presence of loose alluvium materials deposited by the San Gabriel River, the project site falls within a liquefaction hazard zone.[12] Expansive soils are soils that swell when they absorb water and shrink as they dry. Pure clay soils and claystone are good examples of expansive soils. The hazard associated with expansive soils is that structural damage may occur when buildings are placed on these soils. Expansive soils are often present in liquefaction zones due to the high level of groundwater typically associated with liquefiable soils. As such, prior to the commencement of construction, a detailed project-specific geotechnical study shall be prepared by a Registered Geologist to confirm the potential liquefaction-related hazards and design standards pursuant to the California Building Code and other regulations, plans and standards. All project structures would be designed and constructed in accordance with the California Building Code, Uniform Building, Los Angeles County Building Code, and all other applicable local, state, and federal codes relative to liquefaction criteria. This would include the use of foundations designed to compensate for the reduced support provided by liquefiable soils. Compliance with existing regulations would ensure a less than significant impact.

Land subsidence is the loss of surface elevation due to the removal of subsurface support. Land subsidence is caused by activities that contribute to the loss of support materials within the underlying soils, such as agricultural practices or the overdraft of an aquifer. The proposed project may include constructed wetlands, which would be membrane lined and would not allow infiltration to the groundwater. Thus, the impacts associated with subsidence would be less than significant.

The existing WNNC currently uses a septic system. The proposed project includes the removal of the existing septic system and installation and operation of a sanitary sewer line that would be connected to the County's sewer system. No impacts associated with use of a septic system would occur.

[11] EPA. *National Pollution Discharge Elimination System*. website http://cfpub2.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/cgp.cfm, accessed June 28, 2006.

[12] California Geological Survey. *Seismic Hazards Mapping Program, El Monte Quadrangle*. March 25, 1999. website http://gmw.consrv.ca.gov/shmp/download/pdf/ozn_elmo.pdf, accessed July 27, 2006.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
7. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
d. Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	

Construction and operation of the proposed project would not require extensive or on-going use of acutely hazardous materials or substances. Construction activities would be short-term and one-time in nature, and would involve the limited transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Some examples of hazardous materials handling include fueling and servicing construction equipment on-site, and the transport of fuels, lubricating fluids, and solvents. These types of materials, however, are not acutely hazardous, and all storage, handling, and disposal of these materials is regulated by the

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), the Los Angeles County Fire Department, and the Los Angeles County Health Department.

As with the current Nature Center, operation of the Discovery Center would not include the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The occasional use of hazardous materials could include paints, aerosol cans, cleaning agents (solvents), automotive supplies (bi-products), and pesticides and herbicides. These types of materials are not considered acutely hazardous and would be used in limited quantities. All hazardous materials used at the proposed project site would be used, stored, handled, and disposed of in accordance with County, state, and federal laws that protect public safety. These materials are generally disposed of at non-hazardous Class II and III landfills (along with traditional solid waste). Additionally, the proposed project would have adequate facilities for storing these types of materials. Adherence to the regulations set forth by County, state, and federal agencies would reduce the potential for hazardous materials impacts to a less than significant level and would not pose a safety hazard to South El Monte High School.

The project site is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.[13,14,15] The project site is designated as open space and has not historically been used for industrial purposes. Accordingly, no impacts related to such sites would occur.

Storm water treatment wetlands are generally designed to continuously circulate the water using a pump. However, in some areas, water may become stagnant for extended periods of time due to the presence of wetland vegetation. These storm water wetlands have the potential to create mosquito-breeding conditions. In addition, wetlands can attract wild birds and increase interactions between mosquitoes and wild birds, which are hosts for mosquito-borne viruses that can be transmitted to humans. Incorporation of PEIR mitigation measure CD-H1 (consultation with vector control) would reduce impacts on public health due to mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases to a less than significant level.

The project site is not located within a two-mile radius of any public airport or private airstrip. As such, the proposed project would not result in an airplane safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

The proposed project would not interfere with any current emergency response plans or emergency

[13] Department of Toxic Substances Control. *DTSC's Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List – Site Cleanup (Cortese List).* website http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm, accessed June 28, 2006.

[14] EPA. *CERCLIS Hazardous Waste Sites*. website http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/cursites/index.htm, accessed June 28, 2006.

[15] EPA. *National Priorities List*. website http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/index.htm, accessed June 28, 2006.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
evacuation plans for local, state, or federal agencies. Access to all local roads would be maintained during construction and project operation. Any emergency procedures or design features required by County, state, and federal guidelines would be implemented during construction and operation of the proposed project. The project site is located in an open space area along the San Gabriel River. The proposed project site is not located within a Wildfire Hazard Area as identified within the Safety Element of the County of Los Angeles General Plan.[16] However, the project site and the surrounding area contain highly flammable brush, grass, and trees. As such, the project includes installation of fire meter (6-inch) service by the local jurisdictional agency to ensure that adequate fire flows are available in the event of a fire on the project site. The proposed project would also feature a constructed wetland and other water features that would minimize the potential for wildland fires. Impacts related to wildland fires would be less than significant.				
8. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?		X		
b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?		X		
d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?		X		
e. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?		X		

[16] County of Los Angeles. *County of Los Angeles General Plan Safety Element.* December 6, 1990.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?		X		
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?		X		
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has developed a *Water Quality Control Plan, Basin Plan for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura County* (Basin Plan) (1994) to protect the water quality of surface and ground waters of the region. The Basin Plan designated beneficial uses, sets narrative and numerical objectives to protect beneficial uses of water resources, and describes implementation programs. Beneficial uses are processes, habitats, organisms, or features that require water and are considered worthy of protection.

The San Gabriel River flows from the San Gabriel Mountains in the north through the San Gabriel Valley and into the Los Angeles Coastal Plain where it empties into the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor. Storm water runoff from the project site currently drains to the San Gabriel River.

During construction, adherence to all applicable water quality requirements would be required. Because construction activities would disturb greater than one acre of land, the project would be required to comply with the RWQCBs NPDES storm water requirements. Implementation of these requirements, including preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), would address potential water quality impacts during construction; however, further analysis will be undertaken in the EIR to determine if additional mitigation measures are needed to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, or exceed the capacity of the storm drain system. The proposed project includes a constructed wetland to filter and cleanse storm water from the main building, parking lot, and entry road. The proposed drainage system would be designed utilizing sustainable design methods and would not exceed existing outflow conditions. Constructed wetlands, vegetated swales, and bio-swales would be created on-site to reduce runoff velocities, encourage habitat, and remove storm water contaminants.

Potable water to the project site would be supplied by a new 3-inch water meter connected to existing

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
water lines located in Durfee Avenue. No direct removal of well water is anticipated as part of the project. Some storm water collected at the project site would infiltrate into the ground; however, most of the wastewater and storm water would be reused on-site for non-potable water purposes (e.g., landscape irrigation). Implementation of this system would reduce the demand for water by reusing treated water on the project then allow it to percolate into the underlying groundwater basin. Thus, the proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. Impacts would be less than significant. After development of the Discovery Center, any runoff collected on site would be filtered and allowed to percolate into the soil through the constructed wetland, rather than flowing over streets, parking lots, and highways and collecting a pollution load. The increase in impervious surface area is not anticipated to alter drainage patterns, nor would it significantly increase polluted runoff originating from the project site. This issue will be further analyzed in the EIR. A portion of the project site is located within the FEMA 100-year flood hazard area and is subject to inundation during large storm events. Potential impacts related to flooding will be analyzed in the EIR. Due to the distance of the project site to the Pacific Ocean (approximately 28 miles west of the project site) and the numerous structures between the project site and the ocean, there is virtually no risk of on-site hazard due to tsunamis (seismically-induced waves). The closest water body to the project site that has the potential to seiche is Legg Lake, which is located approximately 0.8 miles west of the project site. Due to the distance to the nearest enclosed water body, the project site is not at risk of inundation due to a seiche. The project site is located approximately 0.2 miles north of the San Gabriel River, which is subject to mudflows. Due to the topography of the project site and vegetation currently and planned to be located between the proposed facilities and the river, it is unlikely that mudflows would reach the Discovery Center. Further, the project site is separated from the San Gabriel River by Lario Creek, which would act to dissipate mudflows in the project vicinity. Impacts from inundation of a tsunami, seiche, or mudflow would be less than significant.				
9. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?				X
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?		X		

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
The proposed project would occur within the Recreation Area on the site of the existing WNNC. There are no residential uses within the project site and no roadways would be closed as a result of the project. Accordingly, no communities would be physically divided by the proposed project. The project site is designated Open Space in the Los Angeles County General Plan Whittier Narrows & South El Monte Land Use Plan. Development of the Discovery Center on the project site would be consistent with the adopted use in the General Plan and with the current use of the site as the WNNC. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the applicable land use plan. As discussed in Section 4, Biological Resources, the project site is located within a County SEA. The EIR will include further study related to compliance with the SEA designation.				
10. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
There are no known mineral deposits of economic importance underlying the project site.[17] Development of the Discovery Center would not result in the loss of availability of any known mineral resource. No further evaluation of this issue is required in the EIR.				
11. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		X		
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?		X		
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			

[17] County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning. *County of Los Angeles General Plan Special Management Areas Map*. website http://planning.co.la.ca.us/doc/gp/gpMaps/08pdf_special_areas.pdf, accessed July 26, 2006.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Construction of the Discovery Center would intermittently generate high noise levels on and adjacent to the project site. Construction noise would potentially disturb nearby sensitive receptors, including residences to the west and South El Monte High School to the north. Construction activities would occur over several months. Construction noise would be a short-term adverse effect of the project and mitigation measures may be required to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. Noise levels in the vicinity of the project site would increase as a result of the increased traffic from park visitors, which may significantly impact sensitive receptors in the project area. Noise impacts generated by the construction and operation of the proposed project and their effects on adjacent sensitive receptors will be further evaluated in the EIR. Noise measurements will be undertaken to accurately quantify the potential change in ambient noise levels as a result of the proposed project.

There are no public airports or private airstrips in the project vicinity. Accordingly, the proposed project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to aircraft noise. No further evaluation of this issue is required in the EIR.

12. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
The site for the proposed project is currently developed with the existing Nature Center, associated facilities, and trails. There is no residential development on the project site. No housing units or persons would be displaced as a result of the proposed project, nor would the project necessitate the construction of housing elsewhere. The proposed project would result in increased use of the project site and adjacent sections of Whittier Narrows Recreation Area; however, construction of the Discovery Center would not generate jobs, construct housing, or otherwise induce substantial population growth in the surrounding area. No further evaluation of this issue is required in the EIR.				
13. PUBLIC SERVICES.				
a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i) Fire protection?			X	
ii) Police protection?			X	
iii) Schools?				X
iv) Parks?				X
v) Other public facilities?				X
Fire protection for the project area is currently provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department from Fire Station No. 90 located at 10115 East Rush Street in South El Monte. Police protection for the project site is currently provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department from the substation located on-site. As part of the project, the existing substation would be demolished and new facilities would be provided within the Discovery Center main building. Temporary facilities for this substation would be provided during project construction from the Pico Rivera Station located at 6631 Passons Boulevard in Pico Rivera. As such, police protection service in the project vicinity would not be interrupted during project construction. The increase in park users would not result in the need for additional fire station or police department facilities. Also, the increase in use of the project site would not induce population growth in the area. The impacts to fire and police protection services would be less than significant. The Discovery Center would potentially benefit local schools by providing an interactive educational				

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
space to supplement classroom learning. The proposed project would not result in the need for new school facilities; rather, it would provide increased opportunities for existing school programs. No impacts to schools and other public facilities are anticipated to result from project implementation. Please refer to Section 14, Recreation, for a discussion of the project's effects on nearby parks. Impacts to recreational facilities would be less than significant.				
14. RECREATION.				
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			X	
c. Would the project affect existing recreational opportunities?			X	
The proposed project would address a community need for enhanced educational and recreational facilities. During construction, the WNNC building would be demolished. Construction of the Discovery Center would be temporary and if necessary, arrangements would be made for existing educational/recreational programs at the WNNC to continue at an alternate location during project construction. Alternatively, during project construction, citizens would be referred to other nature programs in the general vicinity of the project site. Portions of the project site would be fenced off and would not be available for use by the public during construction. This may result in temporary increases in the use of other existing recreational facilities in the area. However, due to the small acreage of disturbance relative to the total size of the Recreation Area, any increase in usage at other nearby recreational facilities would be short-term and minimal, and is not expected to cause or accelerate a substantial physical deterioration of those facilities. Construction-related impacts on recreation would be less than significant. The proposed project would result in the continuing use of the project site for passive recreational opportunities, which would not result in substantial physical deterioration of any existing nearby parks. The proposed project would result in new and improved recreational facilities. These new facilities and enhancements would improve the quality of riding, hiking, and other recreational experiences at the project site. Therefore, the long-term impact of the proposed project on recreational resources is beneficial.				

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
15. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a. Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	X			
b. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	X			
c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?		X		
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f. Result in inadequate parking capacity?			X	
g. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				X

Principal highway access routes to the project site include SR 60 to the east and I-605 to the south. Vehicular access to the project site is provided from Durfee Avenue. Pedestrian and bicycle access would be available through various trail connections in the Recreation Area and from sidewalks along Durfee Avenue. The proposed project would generate construction-related traffic on the local roadway network for several months. This includes personal vehicles of construction workers and truck trips related to debris hauling and import of construction materials. In addition, operation of the Discovery Center would attract additional visitors to the project site and increase traffic on nearby roadways and intersections. A transportation analysis will be conducted for the proposed project; the report will be summarized in the EIR and included as an appendix. Potential hazards associated with pedestrian access to the project site will be analyzed in the transportation report.

The proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns or result in any air safety risks; no impacts to air safety would occur. Construction of the Discovery Center would not generate a substantial number of new jobs, construct housing, or otherwise induce substantial population growth in the surrounding area that would increase air traffic. The proposed project does not propose tall buildings that would require re-routing air traffic. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
inadequate emergency access. No street closures are proposed as part of the project. In accordance with County Fire Department regulations, the proposed project has been designed to provide adequate turning radii, lane widths, gate closures, and air space to accommodate emergency vehicles. The proposed project includes a 150-space ADA-accessible parking lot to the east of the main building and park entrance. It is anticipated that the proposed parking would be adequate to serve the needs of park users; however, occasional community events could be held at the project site that would exceed the proposed parking supply and may require overflow parking off-site. Therefore, a parking analysis will be included in the traffic analysis to fully analyze impacts associated with parking supply. The results of the parking analysis will also be summarized in the EIR. The proposed project would include restoration of trail connections to the project site. Bicycle parking would also be provided on-site. Therefore, the project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.				
16. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c. Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			X	
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*

Wastewater would be generated by the proposed facilities. The existing septic system would be demolished as part of the project. A new 8-inch concrete sewer line would be installed in Durfee Avenue. The proposed project would also require a new 3-inch domestic water meter to be installed by the local jurisdictional agency. Although the number of visitors to the project site is expected to increase as a result of the proposed project, the amount of water used and wastewater generated is anticipated to be similar to or less than the existing WNNC. The Discovery Center would be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with LEED standards. Water efficiency is anticipated to be increased by at least 40 percent through the installation and use of low-flow fixtures and the reuse of water for landscape irrigation and other purposes that can utilize non-potable water. As such, new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities would not be required.

The proposed project would not substantially increase stormwater runoff from the site. The majority of the runoff from the project site percolates into the soil; this is not anticipated to substantially change as a result of the proposed project. Any runoff collected on site would be treated and allowed to percolate into the soil through the constructed wetland, rather than flowing over streets, parking lots, and highways and collecting a pollution load. The minor increase in impervious surface area is not anticipated to alter drainage patterns, nor would it significantly increase polluted runoff originating from the project site that such additional storm water drainage would be required.

Construction of the proposed project would result in the generation of solid waste such as scrap lumber, concrete, residual wastes, packing materials, and plastics. It is anticipated that a large amount of the construction debris would be recycled in accordance with PEIR mitigation measure MP-P5, which requires the construction contractor to identify and implement programs for minimizing solid waste generated during construction. Those materials that cannot be recycled would be disposed of at nearby landfills. Disposal and recycling of the construction debris would be required to comply with all federal, state and local regulations, and no impacts would occur. An increase in the number of visitors traveling to the project site is anticipated to result from the proposed project. In accordance with County regulations, the proposed project would meet the requirements for recycling space and provide an easily accessible area serving the Discovery Center that is dedicated to the separation, collection, and storage of materials for recycling. Materials to be recycled generally include paper (white ledger, mixed, and cardboard), glass, plastics, and metals. Compliance with existing regulations would ensure a less than significant impact to area landfills.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
17. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X			
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	X			
c. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

The proposed project has the potential to degrade the quality of the environment through the reduction of natural habitat. In addition, the proposed project has the potential to remove a historic resource and uncover buried archaeological resources. These issues would be further analyzed in the EIR.

The proposed project has the potential to result in significant cumulative impacts. It is anticipated that the project may occur at the same time as other projects in the area, and the incremental effect of this project may be cumulatively considerable. This issue will be further examined in the EIR.

The proposed project has the potential to result in substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Further analysis will be provided in the EIR to determine potentially significant impacts and identify mitigation measure that would reduce impacts to the extent feasible.